

Brookline Preservation Commission

Demolition Application Report

Address: 905 Hammond Street

Petitioner: Linda Ayan

Type of Building(s): house

National Register Listing (if Applicable): n/a



Preliminary Finding of Historical/ Architectural Significance



front entry

The ranch house at 905 Hammond Street was built from plans by architectural designer J. Francis Dooley. The brick veneer house has a prominent hip-roofed extension on the south side of the facade, a center entry and attached two-car garage. John Basile was listed as the owner and builder on the 1951 permit; the estimated cost was \$20,000. This permit was filed after a previous one on an adjacent lot, also designed by Dooley and built by Basile,

who developed four plots on Hammond Street and Laurel Road. This cluster of mid-twentieth century ranch houses represent the most popular type of American house design of the 1950s and 60s.

Witold Rybczynski wrote in *The Ranch House Anomaly: How America fell in and out of love with them*: “Today the suburban ranch house is considered the epitome of conservative taste, but at the time it represented a radical departure from tradition... The layout was open and casual, with wood paneling instead of wallpaper, and room dividers instead of interior walls. The exterior was unabashedly contemporary and did away with steep roofs, dormer windows, and porches.”

The compact size and single floor plans made these houses both attractive and economical for young families. Contemporary publications such as *Good Housekeeping* and *Better Homes and Gardens* touted ranch and split level homes as essences of style and efficiency.

J. Francis Dooley was a prolific mid-20th century architectural designer based in Needham. In Brookline his other work included houses on Walnut Street, Hyslop, Princeton, Valley, Rangeley and Woodland roads. The Wellesley Historical Society holds a collection of 252 of his blue-line prints and blueprints.



Ranch house designs by J. Francis Dooley
(courtesy of the Wellesley Historical Society, Wellesley Massachusetts)



streetscapes on Laurel Road and Hammond Street



The property's significance meets the following criteria in Section 5.3.5--

c. The building is associated with . . . the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the Town or Commonwealth; and

d. The building is historically or architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, method of construction, or its association with a significant architect or builder, either by itself or as part of a group of buildings.



some other ranches nearby on Hammond Street and Laurel Road

